



M E D I A R E L E A S E
STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION

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**FYKE RECOGNIZED AS CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR
BY THE TENNESSEE WILDLIFE FEDERATION**

Nashville, Tenn. - The Tennessee Wildlife Federation recently named Environment and Conservation Commissioner Jim Fyke its Conservationist of the Year for his leadership in protecting and improving the state's natural resources. Fyke has served as Governor Phil Bredesen's Commissioner for the Department of Environment and Conservation since 2005. Prior to his appointment, he served as Deputy Commissioner of Parks and Conservation for two years.

When presenting the award, the TWF cited Fyke's role in helping the state execute Governor Bredesen's land conservation initiatives, including the unprecedented 127,000-acre North Cumberland's acquisition.

"Jim Fyke has been dedicated to protecting public lands and making them accessible for recreation his entire career, and has been invaluable to our efforts to preserve and protect special places in Tennessee," said Bredesen. "I'm pleased to see that he is continuing to receive well-deserved recognition for his efforts and his leadership."

"I'm honored to be named the Tennessee Wildlife Federation's Conservationist of the Year," said Fyke. "Under Governor Bredesen's leadership, and with an exceptional team of professionals at the Department of Environment and Conservation and Tennessee State Parks, we've been able to conserve some very important lands for future generations of Tennesseans. We look forward to continuing this important work."

Tennessee's recognition by the National Recreation and Park Association as having the best state parks system in the country also played a key role in the TWF award. Tennessee State Parks received the prestigious Gold Medal Award for Excellence in Park and Recreation Management in September 2007.

"The Federation doesn't give our Conservationist of the Year unless we have a solid recipient," said Mike Butler, Executive Director of TWF. "Commissioner Fyke made our job easy this year. His leadership in bringing Tennessee State Parks back to life, and the leadership he provided in helping to secure Governor Bredesen's Northern Cumberland's Public Lands acquisition clearly placed him at the front of all of our nominees. We greatly appreciate his efforts and are proud to recognize him with this award."

The Conservationist of the Year award is one of the Conservation Achievement Awards given annually by the TWF since 1965. The Tennessee Wildlife Federation accepts nominations from across Tennessee, and a selection committee comprised of TWF members and board members, as well as conservation professionals and media representatives select award recipients. For more information about the TWF, visit www.tnwf.org.

For more information on Commissioner Jim Fyke and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, visit www.tn.gov/environment.

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